

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 185

Supporting the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement as the framework for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 28, 2001

Mr. GALLEGLY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Supporting the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement as the framework for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Whereas the April 10, 1998, Good Friday Agreement established a framework for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Northern Ireland;

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement provided for the devolution of government from the United Kingdom to local institutions in Northern Ireland, established a North/South Ministerial Council, a British-Irish Council, and consisted of provisions regarding decommissioning, human rights, policing, and prisoners;

Whereas in a referendum on May 22, 1998, the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement provided for the establishment of an Independent Commission on Policing to reorganize current policing practices and to encourage widespread community support for new policing arrangements;

Whereas the Independent Commission on Policing issued a report, referred to as the Patten report, which proposed approximately 175 recommendations to ensure a new beginning to policing most of which were approved by the Parliament of the United Kingdom;

Whereas some of the signatories to the Good Friday Agreement have complained that the subsequent policing legislation adopted by the Parliament failed to fully implement several of the Patten Commission recommendations regarding accountability, authority of the police commissioner, and the commitment to human rights;

Whereas, despite the concerns that the policing provisions are inadequate, plans to implement the recommendations in the Patten report in order to achieve an effective and representative policing service are underway and have resulted in a reported 7,000 applications for positions on the new, balanced police force of Northern Ireland;

Whereas one party to the Good Friday Agreement has declined to appoint its commissioners to the policing board because of its concerns thereby resulting in the inability of the Board to fully implement the necessary reforms needed to provide an effective policing service in a truly balanced manner;

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement established an Independent Commission on Decommissioning to facilitate the process of decommissioning of paramilitary arms;

Whereas spokespersons for the organizations involved in decommissioning, including the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Freedom Fighters, have indicated a willingness to make progress on decommissioning and the Irish Republican Army has actually created sites where weapons used by their members have been stored as a way to prevent the weapons from being used and have subjected the storage sites to international inspection, however, there has been little permanent decommissioning;

Whereas earlier polls indicated that the overwhelming majority of the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland supported decommissioning and recent newspaper and media reports have called for further implementation steps be taken to rid the weapons permanently from the organizations involved;

Whereas the North/South Ministerial Council has been unable to meet or act in a truly representative or effective manner due to the actions of one party to the Good Friday Agreement which refuses to permit all named representatives to participate;

Whereas the Government of the United Kingdom and the Royal Ulster Constabulary in Northern Ireland, despite reports that the use of plastic bullets is counterproductive and often used in a sectarian manner, and despite calls from the European Union to ban the use of plastic bullets, still insist on providing British Army units and the Royal Ulster Constabulary with deadly plastic bullets;

Whereas, despite the glaring, but not insurmountable, flaws in the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, the citizens of Northern Ireland recently went to the polls in national and local elections and in a vote of confidence overwhelmingly voted for candidates representing the par-

ties which supported the Good Friday Agreement and the peace process; and

Whereas the United States must remain politically involved in a bi-partisan manner to ensure the long-term success of the peace agreement: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the continued importance of the
3 Good Friday Agreement and urges all parties to the
4 Agreement to work more diligently for the imple-
5 mentation of its provisions;

6 (2) congratulates the people of Northern Ire-
7 land for once again demonstrating their faith in and
8 continued support for the peace process, the Good
9 Friday Agreement, and those political parties and
10 candidates who support the Agreement;

11 (3) supports the Prime Minister of the United
12 Kingdom, the Irish Taoiseach, and all the leaders of
13 the political parties in Northern Ireland who created
14 the opportunity for a negotiated peace, but now
15 urges them to put aside past differences and dis-
16 putes and to proceed in a meaningful way to actually
17 implement those agreements which they endorsed;

18 (4) encourages all signatories to the Good Fri-
19 day Agreement to remain supportive of the peace
20 process and not to take any precipitous or unneces-
21 sary actions which could undermine the process, in-

1 cluding the weakening or demise of the independent
2 government structures or the Good Friday Agree-
3 ment itself;

4 (5) encourages the Government of the United
5 Kingdom to review the concerns expressed about the
6 inadequacies of implementation of the reforms in the
7 report of the Independent Commission on Policing,
8 referred to as the Patten report, and to submit for
9 remedy those changes which will assist the process;

10 (6) encourages those parties to the Good Friday
11 Agreement which have not appointed members to
12 the policing board to do so in a timely fashion in
13 order to ensure that the police service will gain the
14 support of all of Northern Ireland and which will en-
15 sure that the police service will be multi-ethnic, fair,
16 accountable, free from political control, and com-
17 mitted to human rights;

18 (7) commends the reported thousands of citi-
19 zens of Ireland and Northern Ireland who, despite
20 the public dispute over policing, believe in the neces-
21 sity of police reform and who responded by submit-
22 ting applications to join the new police service;

23 (8) stresses the importance of the beginning of
24 real decommissioning of weapons held by para-
25 military organizations on all sides even if it begins

1 with a modest movement beyond storage and with-
2 out conditions to the success of the peace process;

3 (9) calls on all sides to support the functioning
4 of the North/South Ministerial Council and encour-
5 ages those parties to the Good Friday Agreement
6 who refuse to recognize full representation to drop
7 their opposition in the name of progress;

8 (10) urges the Government of the United King-
9 dom to reconsider its use of plastic bullets, to recall
10 all existing bullets, and to consider additional steps
11 toward the demilitarization of Northern Ireland; and

12 (11) reaffirms the bonds of friendship and co-
13 operation that exist between the United States and
14 the Governments of the United Kingdom and the
15 Republic of Ireland, the continued strong support of
16 the United States for the Good Friday Agreement,
17 and the support of the United States for the political
18 parties who are seeking the resolution of a strong
19 and lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

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